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YURY ZININ. SYRIA TODAY: THE COUNTRY'S FUTURE REMAINS UNCERTAIN

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Abstract. The article examines the situation in Syria after the overthrow of President B. Assad and the coming to power of new forces led by the pro-Islamic State leader Al-Julani Al-Sharaa.

The ideological origins of the coalition of forces that came under the auspices of the Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham* organization, known in the past for its ties with Al-Qaeda*, are revealed. Steps and statements of new leaders to establish their own order, seek recognition in the region and the world community are highlighted.

* Hereinafter the organization banned in the Russian Federation.

The author considers the situation in Syria through the prism of the diversity of the confessional-ethnic composition of its population. They are trying to use this diversity in the narrow-minded interests of adherents of political Islam.

The new rulers of the country formally present themselves in favor of the equality of all national-ethnic components of society. But at the same time, the ruling circles cannot ignore the pressure of jihadists – their mass support, who consider minorities, especially Alawites “apostates.” This is the breeding ground for all sorts of excesses on the part of radical militants after December 6, 2024.

The article highlights events related to the wave of violence that swept the coastal zone of Syria in early March 2025. Its victims were mainly people from the Alawite community.

The author concludes that the situation in the country remains unclear and fraught with the most unexpected turns.

On December 8, 2024, armed formations under the banner of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)¹, led by Al-Julani – the unofficial leader of the conglomerate of anti-government forces – entered Damascus, ending the more than half-century rule of the regime led by Presidents Hafez and Bashar al-Assad.

Bashar al-Assad had held the position of President of the Syrian Arab Republic (SAR) since July 2000, following the death of his father, Hafez al-Assad, who had led the republic since 1971. In 2011, amidst a severe economic crisis, anti-government protests and unrest began in the country. The rise of radical Islamist groups, aided by external interference, led to a protracted civil conflict, the final act of which was the armed jihadist rebellion led by Al-Julani. As events unfolded, Bashar al-Assad left the country, finding refuge for himself and his family in Moscow.

As noted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of RF, the politician made this decision after negotiations with “a number of participants in the armed conflict.” They emphasized that Russia did not take part in these negotiations. Nevertheless, Moscow “is in contact with all factions of the Syrian opposition,” stated the Russian Foreign Ministry. Opposition leadership